working conditions. In this manner, the Scheme helps in strengthening the SSIs so that they can face the competition from increasing imports.

Comprehensive legislation of SSIs

439. SHRI R.K.ANAND:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to bring a comprehensive legislation to promote and remove the bottlenecks in the growth of SSIs;

(b) if so, by when such a biil is likely to be introduced; and

(c) if not, the constraints in doing so and what other measurs are being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) to (c) A draft Bill, viz., "Small and Medium Enterprises Development Bill, 2005" is under active consideration of the Government. Attempts are underway to introduce the Bill in Parliament during the on-going session.

Delay in payment to SSIs

440. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whetter Government are aware that small scale industries in the country are gravely suffering from the delay in payments held by the large organization;and

(b) if so, the action that has been taken by Government to punish these defaulting organizations along with the details for the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Interest on Delayed Payments to Small and Ancillary Industrial

Undertakings ACt., 1993 (as amended in1998) is in force. This Act, *inter alia,* provides for:

(i) Payment of interest by the buyers to the small scale supplier on delayed payment at the penal rate of one and half times the prime lending rate charged by the State Bank of India.

(ii) The amount of penal interest payable or paid by the buyers to be not allowed as deduction for th epurposes of computation of income under the Income Tax Act, 1961; and

(iii) Establishment of Industry Facilitation Councils by the States/ Unions Territories to act as arbitrators or Conciliators under the provisions of the Arbitration and conciliation Act, 1996, in respect of such disputes.

Promotion and development of SSIs in rural areas

441. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for promotion and development of small scale industries in the rural areas of the country at present;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government for implementation of the abvoe proposals?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) The Government has been implementing a number of schemes and programmes for the promotion and development of small scale industries in the country, including the rural areas.

(b) The details of some of the major schemes adn programmes are given in the Annexure [See Appendix 204, Annexure No. 5]

(c) These schemes and programmes are implemented either directly or with the help of State Government/Union Territory Administrations, Industry Associations, etc.